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West Michigan hospitals would receive new funding under 2005 Community Health budget

LANSING – Three West Michigan hospitals would receive additional funding to provide care to uninsured and under-insured patients thanks to a proposal in the Department of Community Health Budget approved by the Michigan Senate Wednesday, announced Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom, R-Norton Shores.

The budget includes a proposed change in the way Medicare Disproportionate Share Hospital Payments are distributed, which would bring more DSH funding to Hackley Hospital in Muskegon, Gerber Hospital in Fremont and West Shore Hospital in Ludington.

“This funding is designed to help hospitals provide critical services to all patients – regardless of their insurance coverage – without sacrificing in other areas, such as staffing or equipment,” Van Woerkom said. “Increasing DSH payments to these hospitals will help them better serve the residents of West Michigan.”

Hackley Hospital’s DSH funding is approximately \$6,900 for the current year and could increase to up to \$58,000 under the budget approved Wednesday.

DSH payments are additional payments in the Medicaid and Medicare programs that, along with local tax appropriations, help hospitals finance care to low-income and uninsured patients.

The legislation now goes to the House for consideration.

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